The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Happy Holidays Everyone!

WHOLE NO. 2021 — WILLIAM GREEN, *President* — WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, JANUARY 3, 1950 — GEORGE MEANY, *Secretary-Treasurer* — VOL. 40, NO. 1

Samuel Gompers-- His Story:

To Samuel Gompers, as to few men, fell the opportunity at a historic time to lead an army of men with a bright torch down a broad highway.

The torch he raised is now held highly by 8,000,000 workers and blazes its light around the world.

In brief, this is his story:

Samuel Gompers was born in East Side, London, January 27, 1850. He was the son of Solomon and Sarah (Rood) Gompers, both born in Holland. His parents and forebears were wage earners.

After but 4 years of schooling, it was necessary for Samuel, then 10 years old, to help bear the burdens of his family. He was apprenticed to learn the shoemakers' trade but found that distasteful and turned to the trade of his father, cigar making. When he was but 13 years of age the Gompers family moved to America.

After learning the cigarmakers' trade under his father's tutelage, the youth became a journeyman worker and joined the English-speaking cigarmakers' union in New York City, old Local Union No. 15.

At first strongly attracted by the humanitarian work of fraternal organizations, young Gompers gave his spare time to lodge work, but as he came to realize the constructive possibilities of the union, he concentrated all of his attention and ability on the promotion of the trade union movement. He first became a leader in his local union and then became prominent in labor affairs of New York City.

Rising to prominence in his international trade organization, the Cigarmakers International Union, he earned a standing and recognition that established him to take part in the effort to form a national federation of trade unions in 1881. He was active in the old federation, serving 2 years as its president and 2 years as a member of its legislative committee, and after the merging of the older federation with new unions under the banner of the American Federation of Labor, served continuously with the exception of 1895, as president.

Samuel Gompers continued to work as a cigarmaker until 37 years of age, giving all his spare time to organization work, sacrificing even the little home life that was accorded to the workers of those days. He held early No. 1 in the international union for many years. Although given numerous opportunities to hold political positions and participate in undertakings that would have made him a rich man, Samuel Gompers held fast to his ideal to make better the lives of the workers.

He became the only full-time representative of the American Federation of Labor in 1886. From then on he gave his full time to the work of developing the economic, movement of wage earners for the establishing of higher standards of work and life. Under his purposeful, constructive leadership, gains were made.

It was a cardinal principle of his leadership that the economic organization could serve all the needs of the trade union and hence he advocated the mobilization of the economic power of wage earners along nonpartisan political lines. Heading an aggressive, nonpartisan political movement by labor in 1906, on behalf of labor he submitted a bill of grievances to responsible political representatives. This policy was followed with increasing success and substantial labor legislation enacted by Congress.

To Samuel Gompers chiefly is due the enactment into law of that fundamental economic principle: the labor of a human being is not a commodity.

By sympathy and training Samuel Gompers was a pacifist. But when this country was confronted with the possibility of war in 1916, he was among the first to pledge whole-hearted support to his country for both himself and the organization he headed.

It was largely due to his influence and determination that the forces of labor were held intact during the subtle and alluring propaganda that might have caused disaster for the cause of the Allies. Labor stood behind the government of the United States and gave its all to the cause of democracy under the leadership of Samuel Gompers. At a possible sacrifice of even life itself, he made several trips across the water during wartime to help cement the loyalty of the workers of allied countries at a critical hour.

He was appointed by President Wilson as a member of the Commission on International Labor Legislation of the Peace Conference at Paris, 1919. At the first meeting of the commission he was unanimously elected president. The commission drafted the Labor Charter of the Peace Treaty, guaranteeing to workers of all countries an equal opportunity for better conditions of life and work.

In the year after World War I, he was a dominant figure in helping to calm over a period of unemployment and restlessness which, without his help, might have developed disastrously by the germs of revolt prevalent the world over.

He was successful in maintaining the morale of his organization and in resisting the efforts made toward the disintegration of the forces of labor during the period of readjustment. He was keenly interested in all attempts made to stabilize production and thus guarantee a higher standard of life for wage earners the world over.

The last weeks of his life witnessed a most extraordinary rounding out of plans and activity extending over 15 years, in the thrilling international demonstrations at El Paso, Juarez and Mexico City. He helped to make possible a Mexican Federation of Labor and participated in the celebration of the first constitutional succession to office of a president, and that president was elected by the laborers of Mexico.

He had just been unanimously reelected president of the American Federation of Labor and of the Pan-American Federation of Labor, of which he was founder, and was engaged in most important service when the end came Dec. 13, 1924. His last words were for the republic he loved so dearly:

"God bless our American institutions. May they grow better day by day."

Harrison Lauded As Clerks Mark 50th Anniversary

Cincinnati—AFL Vice President George M. Harrison, president of the Brotherhood of Railway Steamship Clerks, was praised for his outstanding assistance in organized labor and the nation's political life at the union's 50th anniversary convention here.

The union's golden anniversary was marked at a dinner in the famous hall of Pioneer Lodge No. 1 and Zana Hotel, where the AFL's City Central Body holds.

AFL President William Green paid tribute to Mr. Harrison and the union for their services to humanity in their half-century. Mr. Green said in part:

"In the annals of trade-unionism, Railway Clerks occupies one of the outstanding positions. Its record is vividly recounts the triumphs of heroism, progress and victory over strife and oppression.

"I consider it a great privilege to be able to join with you in celebrating the 50th anniversary of your brotherhood I offer my sincere congratulations to all of you for the remarkable advances you have achieved for the railway workers of the nation during the past half-century.

"There are some short-sighted persons who believe that our great nation stands still. I would advise them to look at the record of progress achieved in the last 50 years. To my mind it contains a miracle of progress.

"At the turn of the century working conditions for railway clerks had become so intolerable that they were compelled in self-defense to join together to aid each other and to advance their interests. Thirty-three courageous pioneers, meeting together in a cigar store in Sedalia, Mo., on September 10, 1899, established the first local lodge of Railway Clerks. Today your brotherhood has more than 300,000 members in almost 2,000 lodges throughout the United States and Canada.

"In those early years, it was considered a great achievement when the union succeeded in securing a 10-hour day with one day off a month--just 30 days off a year--for clerks to rest and without pay. Even as late as 1940 freight handlers on the southern railroads were working 12 hours a day, 7 to 29 cents an hour.

"Today, the workers of the brotherhood employed by a railroad receives more than $1.40 an hour. As a result of struggle, the 8-hour day has been won on the railroads. Security and seniority have been firmly established. And through organization and the Railroad Retirement Law, retirement pay has been provided for clerks who reach old age and survivors benefits for their dependents.

"The record of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks in helping to bring provides a conclusive answer to the cynics of organized labor who in the press and the air with torrents of words belittle progress.

"Nor have the benefits of trade-unionism been confined and restricted to industry operated merely as a business. Labor's progress has been identified and so has the nation as a whole. Labor has made secure rights for your members in peacetime and wartime. Your organization, in fact, constitutes an outstanding chapter in the history of our country. The profits earned by industry prove that the struggles and good works of unions pay dividends in efficient operation which contribute to the benefit of management.

"I feel impelled to say a few words about the leadership of your brotherhood as personified by your grand president and my close friend and associate, George M. Harrison.

"Through the years, since first I came on the executive council of the American Federation of Labor, we had good many years and I have come to know him as a friend. All who have known him is to admire him. He possesses in a rare degree the combination of high idealism and practical realism that makes for progress. His unwavering integrity, his sound judgment and his clear vision have served your brotherhood and the nation well. For he has been the adviser and confidante of Presidents and other national leaders. He has wielded a constructive influence over the political life of our country. And his contributions to the trade-union movement as a whole, both at the national and international level, are so great that I want to say to you here and now that the American Federation of Labor owes a debt of gratitude to the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks for having had George Harrison even part of the time.

"In the labor movement always look ahead. I want to emphasize that we have much to hope for and to work for in 1950 and 1951. Security depends upon the prosperous condition of our country which offers us new opportunities to consolidate our gains and lift the standard of living of the membership and the American people as a whole to new heights.

"Our work must be concentrated on two fronts.

"First, it is our duty and our very reason for existence to organize the unorganized. The American Federation of Labor is preparing to launch a sweeping organizing drive during the coming year with a goal of a million new members by 1950. To my mind that would be the most fitting way we can celebrate the centennial of the father of the organized labor movement, Samuel Gompers.

"Secondly, we must and we shall expand our political activities with the objective of electing a new Congress next November that will be truly liberal and progressive. The reactionary forces in our country are leaving no stone untouched in their drive to discredit and besmirch the record of Franklin D. Roosevelt and his successor, Harry S. Truman. They want to tear down everything that we have helped to build up to protect the welfare of the American people in the last 18 years. They want to repeal the Taft-Hartley Act and the Act will be retained, so that they can know that we mean business. Every labor movement with the help of the rank and file must, wherever an opportune time arrives."

ASK 29 CENTS RAISE

Pittsburgh.—The AFL Amalgamated Street Electric Railway and Motor Coach Employes Division 85 has demanded a 29-cents-an-hour wage increase for 2,800 employes of the Pittsburgh Railways and Motor Coach. Bus and trolley operators now receive $1.55 an hour. Laborers and others $1.21 an hour up.

Labor's Staunch Fighter for Fair Deal

Washington.—Secretary of Labor Maurice J. Tobin is going to spend a lot of time like this in the coming months. He is shown telling a congressional committee why unemployment insurance benefits should be liberalized and extended to cover more workers. As President Truman's staunch cabinet supporter for fair deal he will be spending much time before congressional committees for adequate appropriations for his department, repeal of the Taft-Hartley law and for voicing social and other welfare measures of the people.

Samuel Gompers' Labor Service

Initiated member Cigarmakers International Union, 1864, holding union card No. 1; member Local Union No. 15, 1864-1875; member Local Union No. 144 1875-1924.

President Union No. 144, 1876-81.

Delegate to conventions Cigarmakers International Union from tenth (1877) to the 24th (1922).

Second vice president Cigarmakers International Union, 1887-96.

First vice president Cigarmakers International Union, 1896-1900.

Delegate from Cigarmakers International Union to AFL conventions, 1881-1924.

President, New York State Workingmen's Assembly, 1886.

Federation of Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada, forerunner of American Federation of Labor, 1881; president, legislative committee, 1882; first vice president, legislative committee, becoming president on resignation of that official, 1883; president, legislative committee, 1885; president, legislative committee, 1886.

American Federation of Labor—President 1886-1894 and 1895-1924.

British Trade Union Congress—Fraternal delegate, 1895, 1909 and 1918.

International Secretariat — Unofficial representative, 1909.

International Federation of Trade Unions—Delegate from AFL, 1919.

Pan American Federation of Labor —President, 1918-1924.

For Release at 10 p.m. EST, Jan. 1, 1950:

Asks Quick Action On Social Security As First AFL Goal

Washington.—AFL President William Green today called upon Congress to adopt the new social security amendments as the first order of business.

The amendments were passed by the House last October during the AFL convention.

"What this measure does not provide all the improvements asked by the American Federation of Labor," Mr. Green said, "it contains the most liberal set of provisions that have been before Congress for 10 years. The bill was passed by the House of Representatives last October by an overwhelming vote. We hope and trust the Senate will now approve it and take further action to meet shortcomings of the existing Social Security Act in the interests of equity and grace."

Mr. Green pointed out that the complete legislative program of the American Federation of Labor will be drafted by the AFL Executive Council at its meeting, Jan. 16. He added:

"While repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act is the primary legislative objective of the American Federation of Labor and will remain our first goal until that obnoxious law is wiped out, the votes taken in this house at last year's session of the Congress do not augur well for success at the second session about to begin. Labor's hopes and aspirations for a new Congress in November last will be committed to Taft-Hartley repeal.

"In the meantime, however, labor intends to press for enactment into law of measures of such urgent necessity measures which no longer can be considered controversial and which can not be further delayed without danger to the welfare of the American people.

"Foremost on that list is the social Security bill. It adds 11,000,000 workers to the coverage of the social security protections and it increases benefits substantially. For instance, the benefits of 2,000,000 retired workers, their wives and survivors insurance benefits are given approximately a 50% increase, a thankfully low sum. The bill would also provide for the first substantial aid from the government. There are insurance benefits paid for by payroll taxes upon both employes and employers.

"In these days, when pressure for greater security is being exerted upon all workers in the nation and when labor is leading the fight for security with demands for retirement programs that all Congress must be integrated economically so that prosperity may be freely enjoyed by all among the nations there are among the states in America, without privilege or quotas. His colleagues agreed.

SAFETY PROGRAMS BEGUN

Washington.—The Department of Labor said that the program of the President's Committee on Industrial Safety has resulted in industrial safety training courses thus far in Florida, Oregon, Michigan, Georgia, Maryland, Rhode Island and West Virginia.

Courses are scheduled to be given soon in New Jersey, South Carolina, North Carolina, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, Idaho, Colorado, Iowa and Florida. More than 260 state personnel will be trained in the courses in the 18 states.

Barkley Addresses Opening Of Gompers Centenary Year

For Release 10 p.m., Dec. 31, 1949:

NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE

By WILLIAM GREEN
President, American Federation of Labor

Labor enters the new year confident of continuing prosperity and expectant of further opportunities to improve living standards throughout the nation.

High production and employment in 1950 should expand national income to new heights and make it possible to provide greater economic security for American workers.

Our American economy weathered a severe test in 1949 when the prophets of gloom predicted economic disaster after business conditions appeared to slump temporarily. But the nation came through the critical period stronger than ever and even the most cautious economists are anticipating good business conditions in 1950.

It should be emphasized that the saving factor during the 1949 recession was the high purchasing power of the American people. Coupled with the Social Security System and unemployment insurance, it provided a cushion to ease the shock of falling business and a tailspin.

Thus, labor's determination to seek higher wage rates and stronger security protection during 1950 is aimed at further reinforcing our national economy rather than weakening it.

At the same time, the American Federation of Labor will launch a nationwide organizing drive with the objective of gaining a million more members during the coming year. This will be the highest tribute we can pay to the memory of Samuel Gompers as we celebrate the hundredth anniversary of his birth.

An encouraging development of 1949 which should begin to bear fruit during the coming year was the formation of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. This organization, in which the free labor movements of the world are united, will be possible to checkmate communism and to infiltrate and take over the labor movements of western Europe and other parts of the world. Thus the peace of the world will be safeguarded by the united efforts of free men against the forces of slave labor.

Labor in America faces the political fight of its life in 1950. It appears unlikely that the present Congress will take affirmative action to repeal the Taft-Hartley Act. Hence, the only course open to labor is to be insistent with the nation's needs.

It will be up to all labor union members, therefore, to take a more active part in politics this year than ever before with the objective of electing a new Congress next November that will be truly liberal and progressive.

Through Labor's League for Political Education, the American Federation of Labor will conduct intensified campaigns to bring out a record registration and a big vote. I appeal to every member of the American Federation of Labor and to all the friends of labor to do their part by making certain that they register and to vote in 1950. We are confident that we can elect labor's friends and defeat labor's enemies with a full vote.

It will then be possible to repeal the shameful Taft-Hartley Act and to take definite steps toward the realization of liberal social security laws, decent housing programs, the enjoyment of civil rights by all and a richer and fuller life for the American people. Those are goals in 1950.

Get Millions to Listen to This Man!

Washington.—AFL President William Green and Secretary-Treasurer George Meany urged that editors of labor newspapers publish this ment regularly in a column or box and call attention to broadcasts over the new AFL radio program. Please contact your local Mutual Broadcasting station for exact time and insert name of station and time in space provided.

DUTCH UNIONS ASK A UNITED EUROPE

New York.—Dutch trade unionists endorsed a United States of Europe or, at least, an economic union of the nations of western Europe to promote industrial recovery there.

They were members of the group feted at a luncheon by national AFL officials in Washington and entertained by other AFL groups in Pittsburgh, Detroit, New York, Chicago and elsewhere.

W. Kromel, secretary of the Christian National Trade Union, told reporters that all Europe must be integrated economically so that products might be freely exchanged among the nations there as among the states in America, without tariff or quotas. His colleagues agreed.

Puerto Rico Wage Raise Recommended

Washington.—The first recommendation for establishment of a 75-cents-an-hour minimum wage rate in Puerto Rico has been received from a special industry committee now considering increases in wage rates in the islands under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

The recommendation, made with respect to the shipping industry, was transmitted to Secretary of Labor Maurice J. Tobin today by Wm. R. McComb, administrator of the department's wage and hour and public contracts divisions. The shipping industry now is subject to a minimum wage rate of 40 cents an hour, established in 1945. The proposed rate would bring the industry rate up to the 75-cent minimum wage which becomes effective under the federal wage-hour law on January 25, 1950.

Building Trades

Portland, Ore.—Building trades unions have renewed their contract for one year until Dec. 31, 1950, holding the line on current wage rates and working schedules. Structural iron workers receive $2.30 an hour, carpenters $2.10 and laborers $1.70 an hour.

Dinner Begins Drive to Honor Founder of The AF.L.

Washington.—Vice President Allen W. Harkins and AFL President William Green will address the Jan. 5 dinner launching the Samuel Gompers Centennial Year.

AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany is toastmaster at the AFL Vice President Matthew Woll, as chairman of the Committee on the Gompers Centenary, shared honors.

More than 1,000 reservations were made for the dinner in the Hotel Statler.

The dinner is the opening event in a year-long celebration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Samuel Gompers Jan. 27, 1850 in London. Mr. Gompers founded the American Federation of Labor Nov. 15, 1881 and served as president, with the exception of one year, until his death in 1924.

As the centennial year got under way, these other events were scheduled to emphasize the celebration to honor Mr. Gompers:

1. A year-long campaign to gain 1,000,000 new members.

2. A drive to elect a liberal Congress in November to be dedicated to repeal of the Taft-Hartley law and to win a fair deal in every state capital.

3. A series of organization and political conferences of AFL state federations in January and following months to emphasize the importance of the centennial.

4. Issuance at Washington, D. C., on Jan. 27, of an AFL Executive Council, at Miami, Jan. 30.

5. Fifth AFL Union Industries Show, at Memphis, May 6-11, 1950.

Many other events at national, state and local levels are in the planning stage.

8 Labor Stations To Carry Edwards

Washington.—Eight labor-owned radio stations are carrying the news commentary of Frank Edwards, sponsored by the American Federation of Labor, Monday through Friday.

Edwards' program originates from Washington's station WOL at 10 p.m. Friday at 10 p.m. It is carried by 7 stations of the Mutual Broadcasting System and the 8 labor-owned stations, for a total of 165 stations in 35 states.

The 8 labor stations are WFDF, Flint, Mich.; WCFL, Chicago; KFMY and KWIN, Los Angeles; WDAK, Chattanooga; WDET, Detroit; WCUO, Cleveland; and WFM, Milwaukee.

The call letters of 6 Mutual stations were incorrectly listed in the news service of Dec. 27. The correct listing is:

WHP, Biddleford, Maine, 10 p.m. M-W-F; WLLH, Lowell-Lawrence, Mass., 9 p.m., M-W-F; WREX, Beloit, Minn., 9 p.m., M-W-F; WEBR, Buffalo, N. Y., 10:30 p.m., M-Th-F; WBPZ, Lock Haven, Pa., 10 p.m., M-W-F; WKBN, Youngstown, Ohio, 9 p.m., M-W-F.

Labor paper editors are again urged to run the list of stations and time for Mr. Edwards' broadcast as a standing feature to serve AFL members and friends.

Wright Aids Tobin In Heart Campaign

New York.—Secretary of Labor Maurice J. Tobin today named Wm. A. Wright as chairman of the National Labor Committee for the Heart Association.

To facilitate labor's support in this drive, Secretary Tobin has designated Assistant Secretary of Labor Ralph Watkins of the AFL as liaison.

The $6,000,000 fund-raising drive will be conducted by volunteers and will be conducted by the American Heart Association in 3,000 communities throughout the country, to support a program of scientific research, public education and community service.

The workingmen and women of America have a very real and vital stake in the war against heart disease, a disease that takes a heavier annual toll of life in this country than the next 5 leading causes of death combined," said Secretary Tobin, in accepting the chairmanship. "Organized labor, therefore, a direct interest in mobilizing the moral and financial resources of America in the great work of the American Heart Association."

Secretary Tobin has invited the Governors and Mayors of the 3,000 Heart Green and Red Presidents of national and international unions to serve with him on the National Labor Committee in the 1950 Heart Campaign.

RENEW CONTRACT

Seattle.—Building trades unions have renewed their contract for one year until Dec. 31, 1950, holding the line on current wage rates and working schedules. Structural iron workers receive $2.30 an hour, carpenters $2.10 and laborers $1.70 an hour.

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AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

SUPPLEMENT

WILLIAM GREEN, *President* — WASHINGTON, D. C., FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 1950 — GEORGE MEANY, *Secretary-Treasurer*

Listen to Frank Edwards Every Night

New Senators Sworn as Congress Opens

Washington.—As the 81st Congress began its final session, Vice President Alben W. Barkley (left) congratulates, l. to r., newly-sworn Senators Herbert W. Lehman of New York, Barkley's successful bid for election; William Benton of Connecticut, and Harry Darby of Kansas. Sen. Darby is a Republican, the others Democrats.

Truman, Barkley Hail Samuel Gompers' Vision; Green, Meany Rededicate AFL to His Principles

Truman Program at Glance

Washington.—President Truman asked major legislation to achieve many goals favored by the AFL in his annual state of the union message. Following are highlights:

REPEAL THE TAFT-HARTLEY LAW—Replace it with a fair law. Establish a labor secretary-ship.

SOCIAL SECURITY—Expand the program to provide higher benefits and greater coverage.

HEALTH—Establish a system of medical insurance which will enable all Americans to afford good medical care.

EDUCATION—Provide federal assistance to states for educational purposes.

HOUSING—Extend rent controls another year. Assist cooperatives and other nonprofit groups to build dwellings which middle-income families can afford.

RESOURCES—Approve St. Lawrence seaway and power project and the Columbia Valley Administration.

MILITARY—Continue selective service in this country. Support Atlantic defense plans.

ECONOMIC—Keep the European Recovery Program going without "crippling" cuts in funds. Pass pending measures to put into effect the Point Four program to help American investors develop the underdeveloped nations. Approve United States membership in international trade organizations.

TAXES—"Make some changes in our tax system which will reduce present inequities, stimulate business activity and yield a moderate amount of additional revenue." Specific suggestions will be made shortly.

BUSINESS—"Close the loopholes" in the antitrust laws so as to bar "monopolistic mergers." "Promised proposals to assist small businesses and encourage new enterprise.

FARM—Pass the Brannan plan with its system of production payments; provide mandatory price supports for products which are major sources of farm income and are not adequately covered.

Leaders Open Gompers Centennial

Washington.—Speakers at the Samuel Gompers Centennial Dinner opening a year-long celebration in honor of the AFL founder included, l. to r., AFL Vice President Matthew Woll; Vice President Alben W. Barkley; AFL President William Green and Secretary-Treasurer George Meany. Mrs. Barkley sits next to the vice president and Secretary of State Dean Acheson sits at Mr. Meany's left.

Green Sees Growth in Gompers Ideal; Woll Proposes an Annual Celebration

Washington—AFL President William Green told the Samuel Gompers Centennial Dinner that the record of the AFL shows "there has been growth without change of purpose or goals" from the ideal of the founder.

Vice President Matthew Woll proposed that the nation annually set aside Jan. 27, birthday of Mr. Gompers, as a holiday.

Both officers interlaced their remarks with vivid personal recollections of Mr. Gompers and his principles.

Mr. Green and Mr. Woll are two of the three executive council members who served under Mr. Gompers. The third is Vice President Daniel J. Tobin, president, Teamsters' Union.

Mr. Green said in part:

"Though not a large man, Samuel Gompers had a magnetic personality and a commanding presence that made him loom big as a leader. With a rich and powerful voice and a rare ability to plumb the mind and feelings of his listeners, his was a high crusading spirit that voiced the struggle of his fellow workers, urging them to join unions and to agitate, educate and organize and enlist others in the battle for human freedom. There was a radiance in his gift for living and enjoying homely details and this gift drew men to him in the sincere comradeship.

"In economic relations—where men and women determine their work lives—he conceived of the development of economic order, by mutual contracts guided by basic principles of human welfare and scientific law. He sought to establish the government in which all concerned in production should have representation and voice. He declared, 'We want more, we demand more and when we get that more, we shall insist upon again more and more and never cease until we get the full fruition of our labor.'

"Shorter hours and more pay," he said, 'are the two great constructive forces in the lives of workers.'

"As Samuel Gompers journeyed across the country he saw what he knew was his last labor convention in El Paso, in 1924. He delivered what was his message to labor. In it he embodied his creed. I felt, as he concluded that he sent for me and asked me to read it to the people of other lands were not free and were subjected to low standards of life and labor. That is why he pioneered in the organization of the International Labor Organization and laid special stress on raising the standards and improving the conditions of the toiling folks in the underdeveloped countries.

"The labor internationalism of Gompers takes on special living significance today in view of the recent establishment of the organization of over 50 million free trade unionists under the banner of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. It is to this spirit and aspiration of Gompers that the activities of this new world confederation of free labor unions will have to be activated if they are to accomplish the full fruits of its intended mission.

"The spirit of Samuel Gompers has continued to live on in its potent influence in the labor movement of the nations. It lives today in the daily lives of millions of Americans.

"May I, therefore, venture to propose that we give rise to a new conception of the birthday of Samuel Gompers, a granddaughter, and Dr. J. Calvin McKay, great-grandson of Mr. Gompers.

Mr. Meany appointed Mr. Green and Vice Presidents Tobin and Harrison to escort Mr. Truman, "a great friend of the labor movement," into the meeting. Mr. Green, Mr. Meany said he "has carried on the work of the Executive Federation of Labor completely in keeping with the ideals laid down by Samuel Gompers."

Mr. Woll led the assemblage in a toast to Mr. Gompers and called for an annual celebration of Samuel Gompers' birthday on Jan. 27.

Dinner Begins 100th Year of Founder's Birth

Washington. — President Truman hailed Samuel Gompers, founder of the American Federation of Labor, as "the original architect" of the great movement which set labor free.

Mr. Truman spoke to more than 1,000 cheering listeners at the gala dinner opening the AFL's Gompers Centennial Year.

AFL leaders rededicated the 8,000,000-member organization to Mr. Gompers' principles and his drive to: "Agitate, educate and organize."

Mr. Truman headed a list of distinguished guests at the affair kicking off a year-long campaign to gain 1,000,000 new AFL members and elect a friendly Congress. The meeting was the first of a series at national, state and local levels in honor of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Mr. Gompers in London on Jan. 27, 1850.

Vice President Alben W. Barkley recalled many personal associations with Mr. Gompers. He said Mr. Gompers was "not only the leader of American labor but of labor throughout the world." He said that President Woodrow Wilson leaned heavily on Mr. Gompers for advice and help during World War I.

"The American Federation of Labor is the greatest bulwark against unAmerican influence in the country," Mr. Barkley said. He said he had helped repeal the one-sided railway labor act in the 1920s and pass the law which is still the railway labor law and is "not one-sided as the Taft-Hartley Act now is."

The vice president was accompanied by Mrs. Barkley.

Three members of the executive council—the last to have served on that body when Mr. Gompers was AFL president—were seated at the speakers' table. They were AFL President William Green and Vice Presidents Matthew Woll and Daniel J. Tobin, president of the Teamsters' Union, associate of Mr. Gompers.

Mr. Green and Mr. Woll in their turn were called for a rededication of the AFL membership to the principles and ideals of Mr. Gompers.

AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany delivered the keynote remarks as toastmaster. He said the centennial celebration will focus the attention of the American people on the "great work which the AFL and Samuel Gompers stand."

"Gompers left a great heritage, but he also left a great responsibility," Mr. Meany said. "I can assure you that present leadership of the American Federation of Labor will fulfill that responsibility."

"We expect to spell out Mr. Gompers' life in terms of meetings in all parts of this country to bring home the kind of man Samuel Gompers was."

Five members of President Truman's cabinet were present. They were Secretary of State Dean Acheson; Secretary of Interior Oscar L. Chapman, Secretary of Agriculture Charles Brannan and Secretary of Labor Maurice J. Tobin.

Chairman Elbert D. Thomas of Utah and other Committee Members Hubert H. Humphrey, and Chairman Wayne Morse of the Labor Committee led large delegations from both houses of Congress.

In addition to Mr. Green, Mr. Meany, Mr. Woll and Mr. Daniel T. Tobin, others at the head table were Vice President Matthew F. Tobin; W. C. Birthwright, W. C. Doherty, Frank Duberstein, Charles J. MacGowan, Herman Winter and Dan W. Tracy.

Invocation was offered by the Rev. Dr. Frederick Brown Harris, chaplain of the Senate, and the benediction by the Rev. Dr. Joseph H. Evans, of the graduate school of Georgetown University.

Hundreds of telegrams were received by Government and AFL officials and unions throughout the country and from abroad, including the Canadian Trades and Labor Congress.

Simon Gompers, youngest brother of Samuel, sent a telegram from Conn., expressing his regret at his inability to attend. He is a member of the AFL Sheet Metal Workers.

Seated at the front table were Mrs. Samuel Gompers, Jr., daughter-in-law of the late Samuel Gompers; Dr. J. Kay, a granddaughter, and Dr. J. Calvin McKay, great-grandson of Mr. Gompers.

Truman Asks Goals Supported by AFL

Urges Congress Enact Housing, Security, Labor Measures

Washington. — President Truman asked the new session of the 81st Congress to repeal the Taft-Hartley law, expand social security, enact housing, health and education measures to make these United States a happier land.

All of these goals are supported by the American Federation of Labor. The AFL is keeping close watch on how congressmen will vote on these major issues to determine who is deserving of the support of the 8,000,000 members when the November elections roll around.

At the beginning of an optimistic 5,000-word speech, Mr. Truman said:

"Today, by the grace of God, we stand a free and prosperous nation with greater possibilities for the future than any people have ever had before in the history of the world."

He reviewed the United States' position in world affairs, the need for technical assistance for underdeveloped areas, continued aid to Europe, support for the United Nations, and he set our objective in the world as peace. After a reference to European aid, he said:

"It is more essential now than ever, if the ideals of freedom and representative government are to prevail in these areas, and particularly in the Far East, that their people experience in their own lives, the benefits of scientific and economic advances."

Mr. Truman said that at home "our country must be more than a land of opportunity for a few. It must be a land of opportunity for all of us."

"In such a land we can grow and prosper together," Mr. Truman said.

"These gains cannot be achieved unless our business men maintain their spirit of initiative and enterprise and operate in a competitive economy. They cannot be achieved unless our working men and women and their unions help to increase productivity and obtain for labor a fair share of the benefits of our economic system.

"They cannot be achieved unless we have a stable and prosperous agriculture."

Mr. Truman then took up his recommendations to Congress in detail. He said in part:

"In the case of labor, free collective bargaining must be protected and encouraged. Collective bargaining is not only a fundamental economic freedom for labor. It is also a strengthening and stabilizing influence for our whole economy.

"If the federal statute now governing labor relation is punitive in purpose and one-sided in practice, the statute is, and always has been, inconsistent with the practice of free and effective collective bargaining. It should be repealed and replaced with a law that is fair to all and in harmony with our democratic ideals.

"A full understanding of the problems of modern labor relations is of such importance that I recommend the establishment of a Labor Extension Service to encourage industry-wide activities in this field."

Mr. Truman called for expanded social security; housing to relieve "an acute shortage for low- and middle-income groups especially in large metropolitan areas;" rent control; increased coverage and benefits of unemployment compensation; a federal system of medical insurance, and improving the educational system by providing federal assistance to local schools.

He urged "changes in our tax system which will reduce present inequities, stimulate business activity and yield a moderate amount of additional revenue."

Mr. Truman said he would submit specific recommendations later.

NOTE TO EDITORS

A mat of the speakers at the Gompers Memorial dinner is included with this issue of the news service, in the mail less than 20 hours after the event. Other mats will follow.

SHELLEY SWORN

Washington.—John F. Shelley, president of the California Federation of Labor, was sworn as congressman from California's 5th district as the second session of the 81st Congress began.

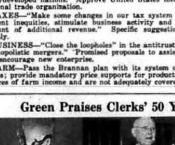
Mr. Shelley, 44, succeeded Rep. Richard J. Welch. He is one of several new House and Senate members successfully supported by the AFL in special elections for congressional office who took their seats for the first time on Jan. 3.

Margolis Resigns Conciliation Post

Washington. — William N. Margolis, widely known in AFL unions, resigned as assistant director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service effective next March 1.

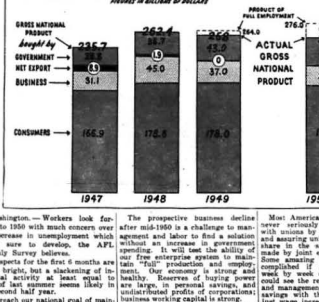
Margolis, in the service 14 years, will open offices as a labor relations consultant in New York, Newark and Washington. He is a lawyer, worked for the New Jersey unemployment Compensation Commission and was assistant regional director for the mediation service in New York City.

Green Praises Clerks' 50 Years



Cincinnati.—AFL President William Green (center) praises AFL Vice President George M. Harrison, president of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, and the clerks' union on the union's 50th anniversary. At the right is President M. W. Clement of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

AFL Says Workers Need Substantial Raise In 1950 to Maintain Full Employment Levels



Washington. — Workers look forward to 1950 with much concern over the increase in unemployment which seems sure to develop, the AFL Monthly Survey believes.

Prospects for the first 6 months are fairly bright, but a slackening of industrial activity at least equal to that of last summer seems likely in the second half year.

"To avoid the national goal of maintaining "full" production and employment, business and industry's products must increase enough each year to provide jobs for all new workers joining the labor force and for those laid off by labor-saving devices. In 1947 and 1948 (and during the war) demand was ample to create these jobs and we had "full employment." Gross national product in 1947 and 1948 (shown on the chart) was the sum total of all products and services turned out by all industries at maximum employment levels. In 1949, for the first time in 8 years, demand fell significantly somewhat below "full employment" levels and unemployment rose by 1,200,000 (year's average). The chart shows the gap ("dotted space) or shortage in demand in 1949, and the even larger gap in prospective demand for 1950. This gap means unemployment.

"Prospects are bright for the first half year. Total business volume should about equal 1948 through May or June of 1950. But this will not be enough to expand production and create jobs for new workers, so unemployment in the first half year will edge upward, exceeding 1949 by perhaps a million.

A down trend is likely in the second half of 1950.

The prospective business decline after mid-1950 is a challenge to management and labor to find a solution without an increase in government spending. It will test the ability of our free enterprise system to maintain "full" production and employment. Our economy is strong and healthy. Reserves of buying power are large, in personal savings, and undistributed profits of corporations; business waiting capital is strong.

We face in 1950 not a depression, but another business readjustment which need not be disruptive if we take the right steps to meet it. Several constructive developments are possible. A gradual price decline will release more buying power; continued spending for business to improve equipment would maintain employment and increase productivity; reduction in the many taxes paid by consumers would make it possible for more of the durable goods they want and need. We do not attempt here to list other proposals. A constructive program can only be worked out by competent representatives of management, labor and other groups.

We do however make the following suggestions to our own government:

A large increase in workers' buying will be essential to keep every worker in the U. S. could receive a 10-cent wage increase, some $8,000,000,000 would be added to consumer buying power, nearly all of which would immediately be spent for living necessities. This would be enough to reverse the prospective downward trend of business and start a rise. But with lower profits in prospect for 1950, many companies would hesitate to give such increases unless forced by reducing costs.

Most American managements have never seriously tried to cooperate with unions by submitting cost data and assuring union members of a fair share in the saving that could be made by joint effort to reduce costs. Some amazing results could be accomplished if workers were given week by week cost records, so they could see the results of their efforts, and management agreed to share the savings with them, determining the cost wage increase by collective bargaining negotiations.

At least a goal could be set of 7, 10 or 15 cents more in wages through collective bargaining. If management recognized the need for an immediate increase in workers' buying power and agreed to such a program of cooperative effort to raise wages, the battle against business recession would be well on the way to victory. It is clear of course that wages must be raised in order to assure a general increase in living costs.

AFL Unions Score 'First' For Chest

New York.—The Community Chests and Councils of America report that the entertainment unions of the American Federation of Labor scored a "first" over the Columbia Broadcasting System during the recent Community Chest campaigns.

For the first time a "stage labor" show tribute to the Red Feather was presented on a nationwide broadcast, made possible through the generosity and cooperation of the AFL unions.

ment and as I survey the problems of today and study the opportunities of the future, I want to say to you men and women of the American labor movement, do not reject the cornerstone upon which labor's structure has been builded—but base your all upon voluntary principles and like mine your every problem by consecrated devotion to that highest of all purposes—human well-being in the fullest, widest, deepest sense."

"The organization which Gompers built has withstood the grilling tests of business prosperity and depression. Because of its service it has gained and held members. Bound by spiritual and fraternal bonds, it has inspired its members to work on for ever higher standards. Its organization he built stands today unchanged in basic principles. As new problems have developed we have applied the founding precept and have added a bit here and there to procedures. There has been growth without change of purpose or goals. Our foundation rooted in understanding of human dignity with inalienable rights to freedom, will remain unchanged.

"We pledge our founder loyalty to the principles he upheld. We know that the freedom we enjoy was gained by the sacrifices of men who understood and accepted responsibility. If we are to continue to enjoy this freedom we must also share responsibility for exercising rights and maintaining freedom."

Mr. Woll said in part:

"The life and labors of Gompers effectually and impressively dramatize the glorious role the genius and greatness of the American democracy and of its people. Here was an immigrant boy who came to the American shores and rose to the greatest achievements in our land and who won the everlasting gratitude and applause of its people.

"Gompers was not only the architect who made the blueprints for the creation of the revolutionary Federation of Labor; he was also the builder who laid the first bricks of labor's faithful and the caretaker who zealously guarded the main principles upon which labor's structure was founded.

"Gompers realized that the labor movement of no nation could long remain free and stay prosperous long as the underprivileged people of other lands

"The labor internationalism of Gompers takes on special living significance today in view of the recent establishment of the organization of over 50 million free trade unionists under the banner of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. It is to this spirit and aspiration of Gompers that the activities of this new world confederation of free labor unions will have to be activated if they are to accomplish the full fruits of its intended mission.

"The spirit of Samuel Gompers has continued to live on in its potent influence in the labor movement of the nations. It lives today in the daily lives of millions of Americans.

"May I, therefore, venture to propose that we give rise to a new conception of the birthday of Samuel Gompers, a granddaughter, and Dr. J. Calvin McKay, great-grandson of Mr. Gompers.

RULES TIGHTENED ON EXEMPT JOBS

Washington.—Adoption of revised rules governing minimum wage and overtime exemption of certain so-called "white collar" employees under the Fair Labor Standards Act—the wage-hour law—was announced by Wm. R. McComb, administrator of the U. S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour and Public Contracts Divisions.

The new regulations, which will continued to apply to about 2,500,000 employees, become effective on January 25, 1950, effective date of the Fair Labor Standards Amendments of 1949, which increase the wage-hour law's minimum wage to 75 cents an hour and make other changes in this law.

The new regulations define "executive" duties, responsibilities, salary levels, and other basic requirements which employers must apply in determining whether or not employees may be exempt from the wage and hour provisions of the wage-hour law as an executive, administrative, professional, local retailing, or outside salesman type of employe. They provide a salary and fee tests for executive employes; a salary and four tests for administrative and professional employes.